

## John Gardiner's Navy Service – 1942 – 1946 – Part 4 - Palestine



At the beginning of June 1944 - while Britain was frantically making final preparations for D-Day and the Allied landings in Normandy - it seems that John and his fellow sailors were leaving Egypt and making their way to

Jerusalem on shore leave.

En route to Jerusalem John appears to have taken this amazing photo of these locals going about their daily business on the dusty roads carrying their wares on their backs and heads.

This shore leave to the Holy Land was a most enjoyable one for John. Whilst in Jerusalem he visited the Old City, the Wailing Wall, The Church of the Holy Sepulchre and the Garden of Gethsemane where he told of seeing the footprint in the rock which is said to be the last footprint of Jesus.



On 3 June 1944 John was photographed in this group of Naval Personnel in Jerusalem on the steps



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outside the Golden **'Dome of the Rock'** - which according to the back of the photo was taken by an *'approved Military Photographer'*. It is thought to be some of the crew of ss **Empire Copperfield** or ss **SAMSTRULE** - but it may be **Royal Navy DEMS** from several different ships in the area.

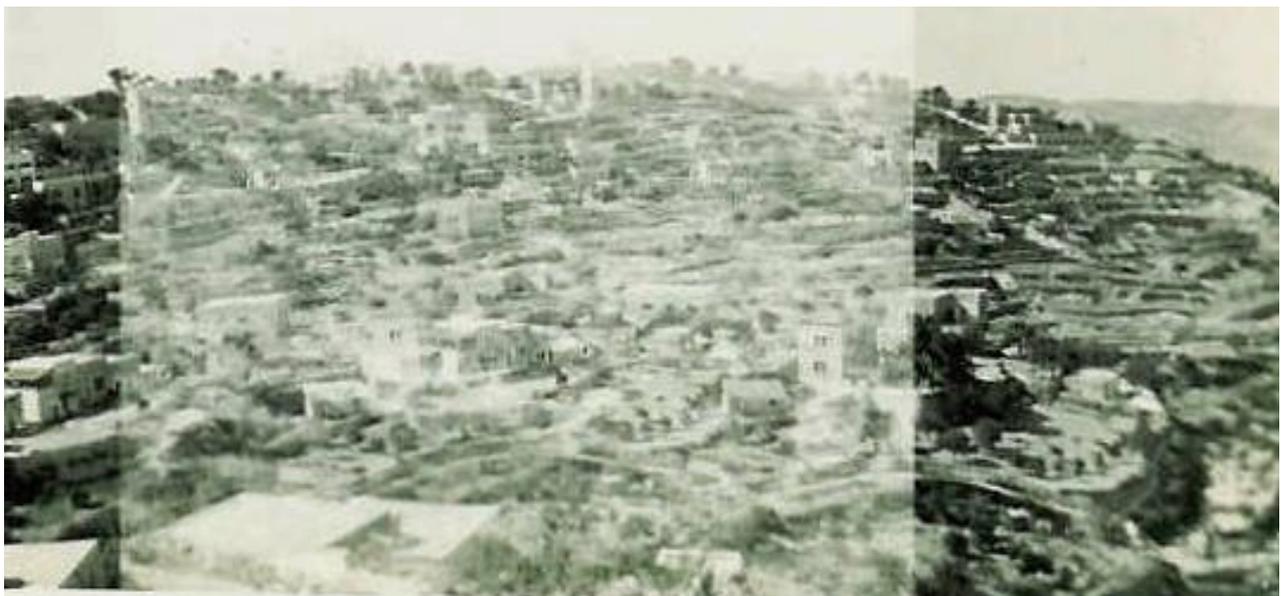
In the Old City of Jerusalem - thought to be outside **'Temple Mount'** - John is photographed in two photos with several pals and an Officer and a lady in uniform. Photo taken in June 1944.

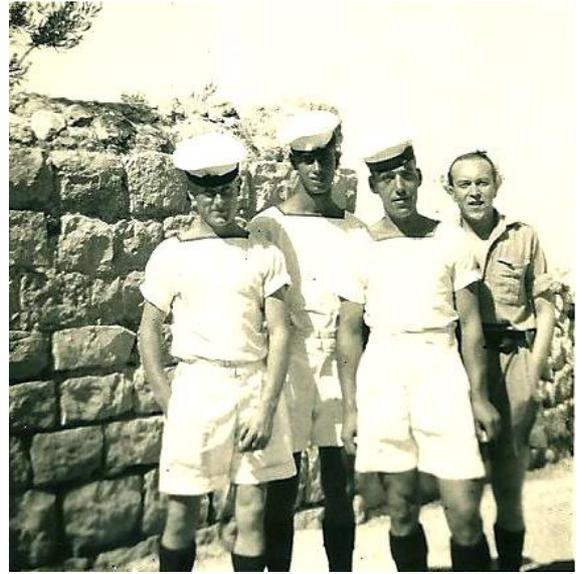


These photos (*below*) of John and one of his 3 pals are thought to have been photographed in **Bethlehem** - again in June 1944 - where they visited the '*Church of the Nativity*' to see the shrine over the place where Christ was born.



This photo (*below*) - taken by John - is thought to be the view of Bethlehem from the top of the *Church of the Nativity* and although sadly not a perfect photo - it remained a very treasured possession and a reminder of his visit to this historic place.

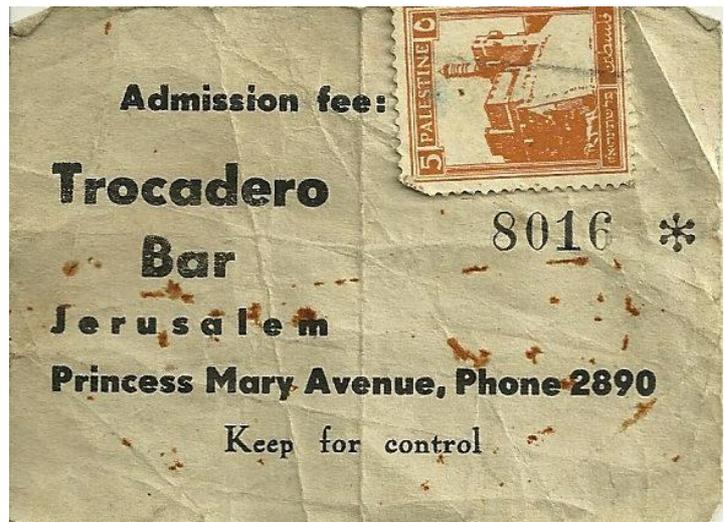




More photos of John's pals - in June 1944 - thought to be taken in Bethlehem.



Two of John's mementos are a paid entrance ticket to the 'Trocadero Bar' in Jerusalem!



and a small set of hand carved wooden animals shown in this photo comprising of a man riding on a donkey leading 3 camels which was thought to have been bought in Jerusalem or Bethlehem.



This trip to the Holy Land was probably only a very short shore leave - but, no doubt, a very welcome break for John and his fellow sailors away from their arduous work of tending the guns on board ship and the dangers of war.